

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Introduction

This Design & Access Statement supports the submission of a planning application for the stationing of a temporary café and small outdoor seating area at the eastern entrance to the Lower Leas Coastal Park. The café would be located on vacant land just to the north of the Coastal Park car park and to the northeast of a recently installed public toilet and changing places facilities.

The grade II* Leas Lift Funicular Railway is soon to undergo essential restoration works with plans of reopening to the public in 2025, which will greatly enhance the immediate area and wider town. The Lift Café will need to close temporarily during the restoration works. Since it opened The Lift Café has helped to raise funds for the restoration of the grade II* Funicular Railway and has proved very popular with locals and tourists, as well as employing local people.

To ensure the café facility is retained during the restoration works The Folkestone Leas Lift Charity would like to station a temporary café a short distance to the west of the existing site on the edge of the Coastal Park Car Park.

The temporary Lift Café would be housed in a dark red container during the restoration works to the Leas Lift Funicular Railway and Lift Café. The restoration works are expected to take approximately 18 – 24 months. Therefore, we are requesting a temporary permission for 24 months to cover this period and we are happy to discuss the suggested temporary time period with the Council during the application as well as the proposed colour.

Existing Site



Red star indicates approx. location of temporary café

The application site comprises a small, grassed area of the Lower Leas Coastal Park located next to the Coastal Park car park. There are no trees or plants on the site and the temporary café would not result in any permanent landscape or ecology harm. The café would be located at the eastern entrance to the Coastal Park, just to the northeast of the recently installed public toilets and changing facilities. The public footpath runs directly to the north of the application site through the Coastal Park, providing excellent access to the proposed café and, we believe the proposed café and location would make a positive contribution at the eastern entrance of the Lower Leas Coastal Park and would enhance the public facilities on offer within the Coastal Park.



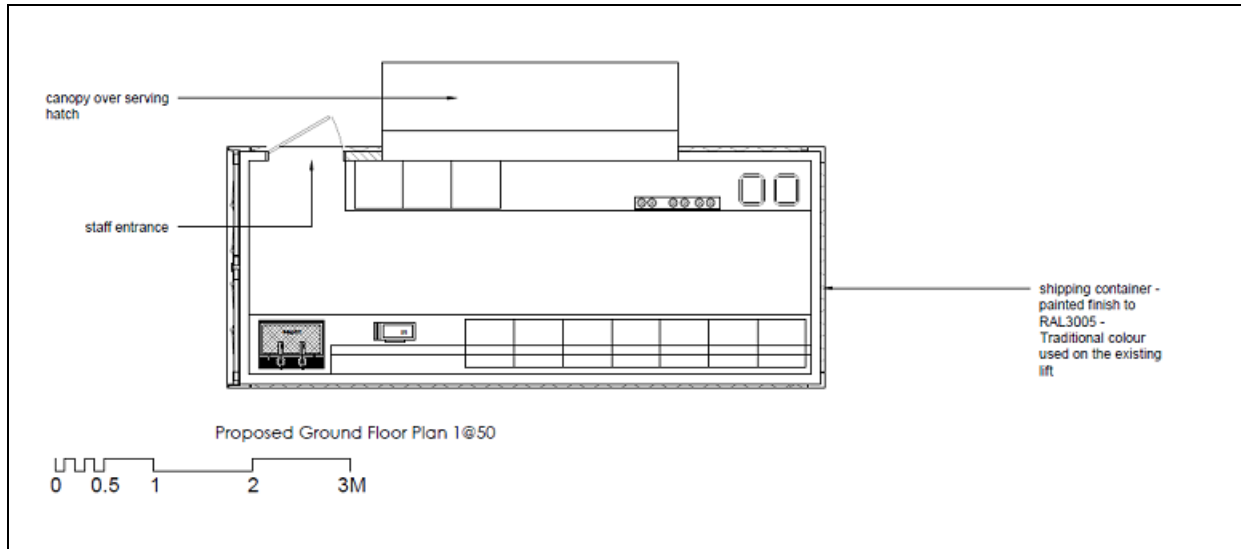
Red star indicates approx. location of temporary café. Blue star indicates location of new toilets

Amount

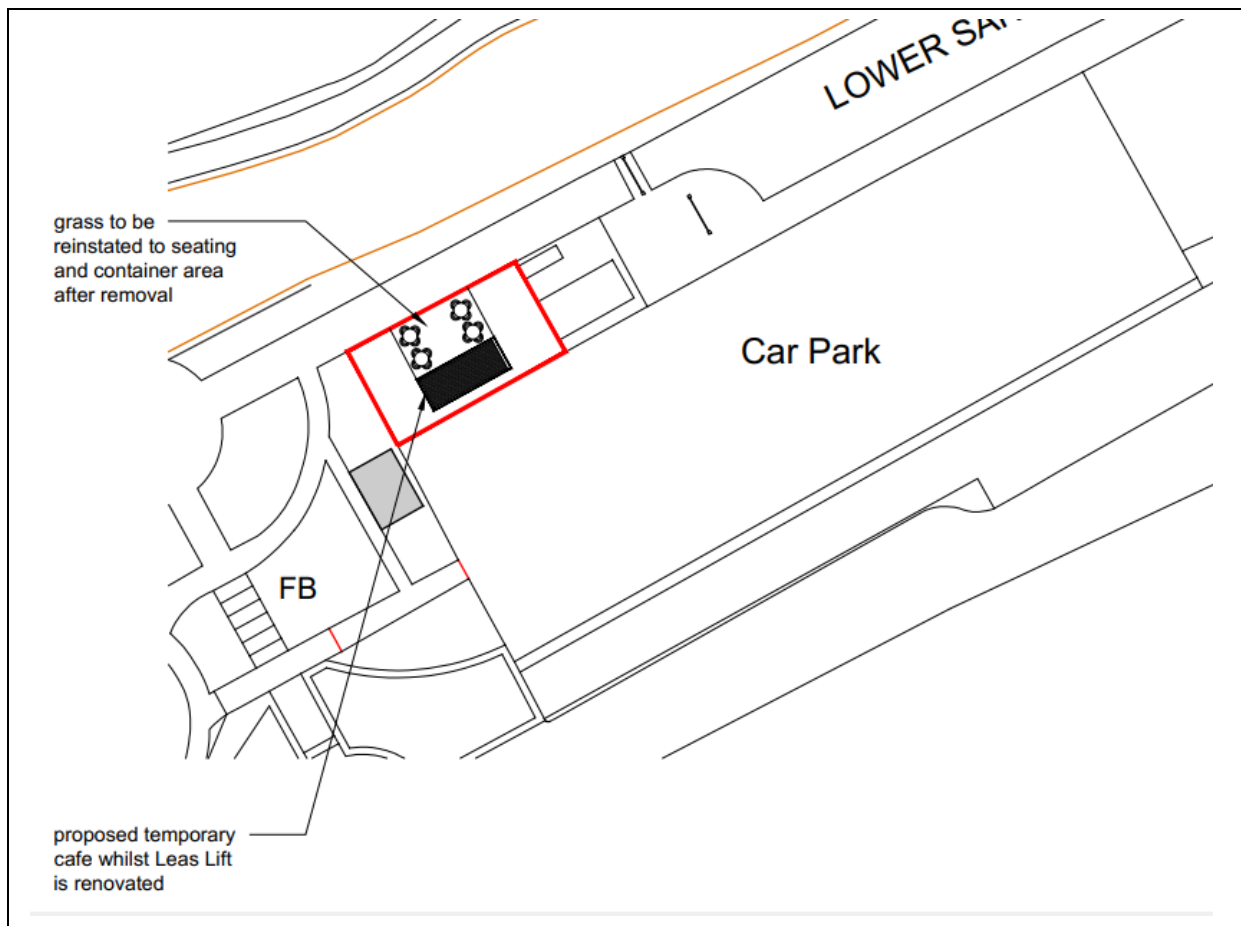
A single shipping container is proposed to accommodate the temporary café during restoration works to the Leas Lift.

The container would measure approximately 2.7m high with a footprint of 6m x 2.5m and would have a small seating area outside the front, to the north of the café.

The café would have a serving hatch and staff entrance door on the front / north elevation. The public would not be permitted inside the temporary café and would utilise the serving hatch only.



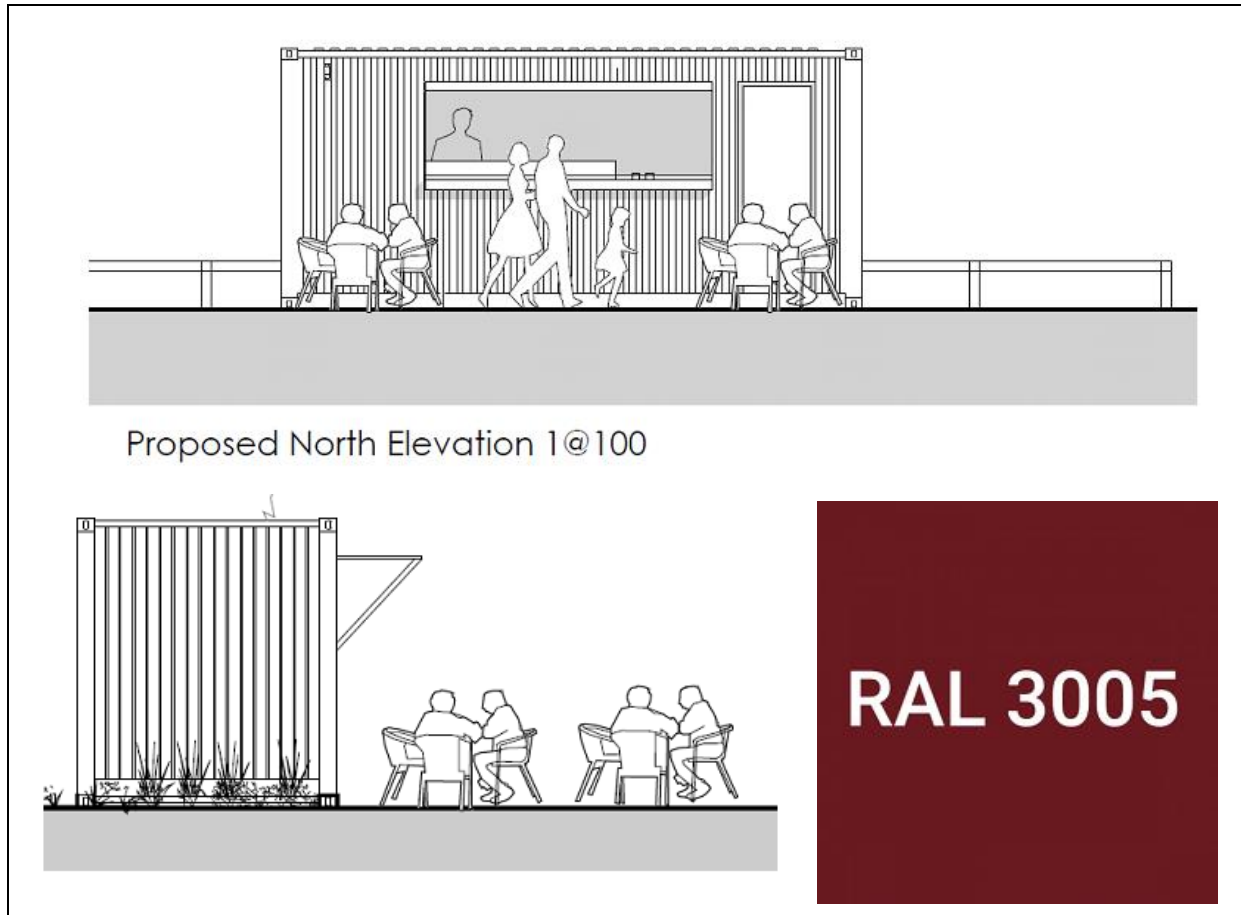
Ground floor plan. The temporary cafe would provide a serving hatch for customers. No indoor public access / seating is proposed.



Proposed site plan showing the location of the temporary cafe and small outdoor seating area

Appearance & Layout

The temporary container café would be painted a RAL 3005, a deep wine red, to reflect the colours and history of Leas Lift Funicular Railway and Lift Café.



Proposed front and side elevations and colour

The temporary café would not appear out of context with the recently installed changing facilities and toilet building located just to the north of the site and would in fact compliment these new facilities creating an enhanced public entrance into the Lower Leas Coastal Park. The proposed café and recently installed changing places building would also help to screen and form a buffer between the carpark and landscaped gardens within Coastal Park, which in our view would enhance the public appreciation of the park.

Access

The temporary café would be readily accessible from the existing public footpath located directly to the north of the site.

Level access would be provided from the existing footpath to the front of the temporary café.

The proposal, including the small outdoor seating area, would not result in any obstruction to pedestrian footpaths running through the Coastal Park and these routes would remain free

from any obstructions. In addition, there would be ample space at the front and adjacent to café to ensure customers waiting to be served would not cause an obstruction to the adjacent pedestrian routes running through the Coastal Park.

Landscaping and Sustainability

The application site comprises a very small section of managed grass located at the entrance of the Coastal Park adjacent the Coastal Park car park.

The temporary café and seating area would not impact any trees or planting within the Coastal Park and the grass would be reinstated after the container is removed at the end of the temporary period.

The proposal is considered to have a very low ecological impact due to the nature of the application site (managed grass) and due to size and temporary nature of the proposal. As such it would not be proportionate to undertake ecology surveys in this instance.

Other matters

The applicant sought pre-application advice from the Council regarding the stationing of the temporary café. The Council advised that temporary planning permission would be required but advised that the general principle of the proposal is supportable, subject to an assessment on the impact of the Bayle Conservation Area.

The application is supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment which concludes that the temporary nature of the proposal would only have a very limited impact on the character of the Conservation Area. In addition, the proposal provides public benefits and would complement and enhance the eastern entrance to the Lower Leas Coastal Park and the temporary container would not appear out of context with the recently installed changing places facilities located adjacent the site.

The landowner and leaseholder/land manager have also been consulted prior to submitting the application and have been formally notified at the application stage.